

The COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLV February 21, 1947 NUMBER 19

THE WEEK	459
LANDSCAPE: WHEATFIELDS (<i>Verse</i>)	
Thomas Merton	463
ENGLAND'S STRUGGLE	J. L. Benvenisti 464
TOURIST NOTES	Harry Sylvester 466
THE STAGE	Kappo Phelan 469
THE SCREEN	Philip T. Hartung 469
THE ANGELIC PORCUPINE	Mason Wade 470
IN THE SEVEN DISTRICTS	

BOOKS OF THE WEEK	475
-------------------	-----

*Human Destiny—Congress at the Crossroads—
The Story of a Childhood—European Wit-
ness—Journey to Accompong—Letters from
Lee's Army*

THE COMMONWEAL is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catho-
lic Periodical Index and Catholic Bookman. Founded by
the Calvert Associates, Inc., in 1924, with Michael Wil-
hams as President and Editor.

Published weekly and copyrighted 1947 in the U. S. A. by
The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave-
nue, New York 16, N. Y. ASbland 4-9685. Entered as
second class matter February 9, 1934, at the post office
at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.
U. S. and Canada \$6 a year, Foreign \$7. Single copies 15c.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR., Editor

C. G. PAULDING, Managing Editor

JOHN BRODERICK, Assistant Managing Editor
Associate Editors

John C. Cort, Anne Fremantle, Gregory Smith,
Kappo Phelan, Theater Philip T. Hartung, Cinema

Corresponding Editors

Harry Lorin Binns, Philip Burnham

Advertising Manager

John Brubaker

The German Settlement

CHARGES in the Soviet papers about ten billion dollars worth of German goods and equipment seized by Britain and the United States as advance reparations underline one of the principal controversies involved in the German peace treaty. The United States is, on the contrary, strongly committed to a policy of building up Germany to the point of self-support. In immediate terms American authorities want Germany to be able to make enough exports to pay for the food which must be provided by this country and Britain—some half billion dollars worth has had to be shipped in already. And in the long run it seems more desirable to America that the bulk of German trade be carried on with the Western Powers.

The Russians are still reparations-minded and Soviet Ukraine is making another huge demand for German industrial machinery as reparations. In the Russian zone the Soviets have done a typically thorough job of stripping and continually complain that their due share has not been forwarded from the occupation zones of the other Allies. The one hope of some workable compromise being reached in this area is the indica-

tion that the Russians may be beginning to recognize the acceptability of German manufactured goods. In any case they want the German economy coordinated in their direction.

In the contest for German sympathy between an impoverished nation such as Russia and a wealthy one such as ours, we have one obvious advantage. Consequently, the former are resorting to political devices. Instead of the federalized union of German states favored by America, Britain and France, the Soviets are advocating a strongly centralized Germany, with Berlin its capital, within twenty miles, by the way, of Soviet-satellite Poland. Their press is bounding away at the idea that the German people must decide their future status. The Russians are also rebuilding certain German cities and playing with an idea which has seemed almost inevitable for them—the extension of some of Germany's eastern frontiers (at the expense of subject Poland).

How can the question of Germany's future, where the principals have such a divergence of views, be resolved? It is not made any easier by France's fear of a reconstituted Germany, Russian suspicion of Anglo-American collaboration, or by the necessity of reconstituted economic union for a foundation. It is not rendered any easier by the opposing conceptions of the future status of the Ruhr on the part of France, Britain, Russia.

The Powers agree in the main that Germany should be reborn and even become a going nation economically, provided it is prevented from ever starting another war. Beyond this, agreement ceases. The Moscow conference of March 10, therefore, confronts the biggest issue tackled yet. At least Russia's new-found might can be reckoned as a check to German military resurgence regardless of the latest weapons. The foreign ministers meeting in Moscow can, then, permit some degree of German industrial revival. American representatives must, however, hold firm for a German settlement which will allow Western Europe itself to stand on its own economic foundations. For Germany is the industrial dynamo upon which the neighboring nations are dependent for much of their livelihood.

December Invitation

WE HOPE that by the time this issue appears the Russians will have recovered the geniality that was so prominent a characteristic of their delegation during the closing moments of the meeting of foreign ministers last December—an emotional state which prompted Mr. Molotov to assure Mr. Byrnes that when the ministers reconvened in Moscow next March it would be perfectly fine for the United States to bring along this country's notion of an adequate press camp. There was even some hurried talk, at the time,

[459]

about broadcasting arrangements. It appears now, though, that it was all banquet talk; the kind of thing Mr. Molotov always says when he spends an evening out with a party of stock-brokers from the West. So far, seventy-five publications of one kind or another have applied to the State Department for permission to send a man to the Moscow conference, but the Russians, embarrassed at the thought of entertaining so large a gathering, have requested that Secretary Marshall trim down the group to twenty or twenty-five journalists. As for the radio people—it looks as though they will just have to wait until some other time.

Last December, when Mr. Molotov was talking dreamily of Moscow in the spring, the American press urged Mr. Byrnes to make quite sure the Russians understood whom they were inviting. Compared with the volume of its insistence two months ago, press reaction to the Russian plea for reconsideration has been strangely mild, an indication perhaps that no one any longer expects the Kremlin in March to sound like the Kremlin in December.

Secretary Marshall can scarcely be expected to welcome any new problems, but this one—the question of American press representation at the conference in Moscow—should have a certain training value. By the time he has initialed the final teletype on this subject the Secretary should have an excellent idea of what conversation will be like in Moscow next month. It is difficult to say which tangent of persuasion Secretary Marshall will select for his opening approach to the Soviet ruling mind. The Russians, as a result of their own successful experience with a small, well-managed news service, are likely to find absurd this country's inflated understanding of how to cover an international conference. Sometimes it seems to us, too, that the American press and radio corps could be thinned out a little, but for the sake of the people who read *PM* and for the good of the people who subscribe to the *Chicago Tribune*, we feel that, in this matter, Secretary Marshall should flex the heritage of gentle firmness passed on to him by Mr. Byrnes.

For the Record

THE WORST fears which have been expressed as to the fate of the Baltic States are approaching realization. What can be done about it in a world where power and possession call ninety-nine percent of the plays is obscure. It is, none the less, important to have the facts for all to see. The source in this case is the London *Economist*, which, on the basis of Russian press and radio reports, finds that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as such are fast disappearing from the face of this earth. National leaders have been removed from

the scene long since. Now increasing numbers of the native populations of these States are being shipped to forced-labor camps deep in the interior of Russia to be replaced by Russian Communists of whose loyalty the Kremlin is assured. Involved in all this is a total population of some six million souls and three small nations whose independence is still recognized by the United States. Here is the *Economist's* prediction: "If the present rate of deporting Balts and importing Russians is maintained for a few more years the national characteristics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will disappear . . ."

Keeping Unions in What Place?

IN NEW YORK STATE, the American Federation of Labor and the CIO have requested representation on the Board of Regents, which regulates state education and educational standards. Both labor organizations addressed the governor and various legislative leaders, mentioning specific union people they would like to have fill the vacancies now existing in the Board. With three vacancies, each labor group certainly ought to place a member on the Board of Regents—and this is one kind of representation and responsibility it would seem that unions should increasingly secure all around the country where they are as powerfully and maturely organized as in New York.

The labor unions are more than economic fighting machines (but don't forget they are powerfully that: capable most likely soon to enforce such demands as this, anyway). The unions are among the most energetic and flourishing general social institutions in the current set-up, and they increasingly organize broader aspects of their members' lives than only a proper interest in wages and hours. Enemies of the unions, especially, point out that their influence spreads over much farther reaches of the business of the country than simply the pay men get for the hours they work.

Except for those whose hope for the future is based crudely on civil strife and class war, nearly everyone would like to see the unions undertake more positive and creative work in more responsible fashion than we generally hear about. It looks stupid for politicians, professional people, managers and owners to continue to treat unions as though they were gangs of bad boys from the wrong side of the tracks interested solely in breaking windows and stealing apples. The CIO and the AFL are great and powerful institutions with sweeping interests and with capable men and women active in nearly every field of public life. Within both, specifically, educational programs and departments are growing to great and obvious importance.

The only reaction to this New York request which the papers reported is negative. Governor Dewey is not supposed to like the CIO. "Legislators" say that in the Board of Regents there should be no "class representation." Without asking which way they mean that, one can observe that this sort of negative reaction seems very likely the kind which forces unions to conform to an unnatural, or at least unnecessary, class war pattern. Union members are wage earners, to be sure, and thus have come together on the basis of one economic class position in the economy. But this is a very, very wide class, and it takes a rather hard-boiled Marxian dogmatist to claim it is of sufficient and determining importance in all phases of opinion and action. Unions also represent functional industrial classes or groups, and, more and more, general and not sharply defined social viewpoints. The New York Regents would benefit almost certainly by intelligent and able union representatives sitting among them. Public bodies throughout the country, serving for very many purposes, would benefit generally to have the AFL and the CIO enter into their work and responsibility through qualified representatives welcomed gladly and freely by the public authorities.

California Oil

THE CRY of "states' rights" too often indicates some private raid upon a public preserve to fool any citizen who is alert. In the South it has been invoked in defense of a poll tax system which bars great numbers of the native inhabitants, mostly but not by any means exclusively Negroes, from exercising their basic right to vote. On the Pacific Coast the slogan has been invoked most recently in irrigation matters, where large private interests have sought to transfer water rights to the individual state and thus get around the 160-acre limitation on properties eligible imposed by federal legislation.

Current recourse to state, as opposed to federal, sovereignty comes from big private interests too—California oil companies. The prize is rich indeed: the land between high and low tides beneath which lie substantial oil deposits.

The legal side of the matter, outlined by Dwight L. Sawyer in *Mining and Metallurgy*, appears unassailable. The Admission Act passed by Congress, September 9, 1850, by which California became a state of the Union, specifically established California's western boundary as "the line of mean high tide" on that day. That reserves the submerged lands and tidelands to the grantor, the United States. The Admission Act also includes the following: "The State of California is admitted into the Union upon the express condition that the people of said State, through their Legislature or otherwise, shall never interfere

with the primary disposal of public lands within the State . . ." When in 1866 Congress granted California 550,000 acres of land for its schools, it was provided that if any of these acres should prove to be mineral-bearing, they should be given back in exchange for a like number of acres of full-fledged farming land. It is a clear-cut record.

Painful as is the spectacle of private raids upon the national patrimony at any juncture, the California tidelands claim raised by State Attorney General Robert W. Kenny and others is particularly disturbing at the present moment. For the federal government is asserting its rights there in the interests of the national defense. Indeed the Senate Oil Investigating Committee, convinced that the nation could not fight another war on its present oil resources, has called for every step to develop the oil reserves within our borders, reserves which "are more likely than not to constitute the citadel of our defense." Nothing less is at stake in the contest between oil interests and the Government over these rich Pacific tidelands.

The Air Age Family

AN UNBENDING attitude toward the air age is not a cornerstone of this magazine's editorial policy, but before leaving the ground in favor of a permanent residence in the better society that is being set up elsewhere, it seems a good idea, in view of a recent statement attributed to a director of the aviation rally held last week in New York City, to delay until the requirements for air world citizenship are more clearly defined. In the air age, said the official (as reported by the *New York Times*), families will be smaller. After noting this remark, the *Times* story shifted, without comment, to a survey of the rally as a whole, leaving the public free to arrive at independent conclusions about the size of the ideal air age family.

There is no telling what passes for humor in airborne circles, so it is possible that the official was alluding merely, in a wry fashion of his own, to this winter's record of travel by air. But judging by the temper of their advertising and other public declarations, the air world people do not seem to be aiming, consciously, at a burlesque of their enterprise, and the spokesman quoted by the *Times* probably intended his remark to be received as a hint of grand things to come. This tantalizing peek at the drawing board suggests that the air-age group, while waiting impatiently for atomic energy to be released on the open market, has been busy with social planning. Beginning with a study of the basic social unit, the group has apparently decided that the cumbersome, multi-member family will be unsuitable in the air age. This is harsh news. It is true, though, that a large family is usually a rather uncontrolled

organization, and in an air world the trail of baseball gloves, tennis rackets, and bassinets that accompanies its movement would be constantly ruffling the air foil. Sponsors of the age may be able to work out a solution for this incompatibility later on, but in the meantime it is probably just as well to know in advance who is likely to be left behind.

Investigators and Democracy

THEY CAME into the office one after another at intervals of a month or so, before and all through the war, asking what we knew about this alien from Poland, this foreigner from France, this American from New York. The man would produce a card with some name on it above the name of an agency, and then he would say that his agency was employed by the government to investigate; he would open a wallet, show credentials, open a notebook and start writing longhand. At first we thought they must be FBI, or State Department Intelligence, or Army or Navy Intelligence, or Colonel (then) Donovan Intelligence, or Immigration and Naturalization Intelligence, or Senate Committee Intelligence, masquerading as a private dick, but, after we had seen the first of them at work, then the second, then the twentieth, we thought that they were just what they were: men who had been given twenty questions to ask but who could never guess the answer.

At first, also, when we sat with the investigator alone, there would be soon a third person present. The investigator would say now this man Mounier you say is anti-fascist, now do I get you right that he is left? At first it happened every time. As soon as the investigator started talking, the man he talked about would come into the room. There would be a person there, the person we had known, and while the investigator wrote everything down in his book we would look over his shoulders at the man we had known, and we would try to say what he was, precisely what he thought, exactly what he wanted the world to be. The investigators were always mild and quiet men; it was only that they could not understand; so that we had to forget the long days spent with Mounier, the long days of analysis and research, his sudden anger, his constant generosity, we had to send him back to France where he was (the Italians back to Italy, the Poles to Poland, the American anywhere in the country so long as it was not in our office) and then we would make a simple picture for the investigator to paste in his book. Mounier is a democrat, we would say, but if that worries you he is a Republican—he does not drink.

Senator Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee never came to our office. When the investigators came they were stupid, but they only stayed half an hour. Senator McKellar asks questions by the week. The investigators were always polite.

Last week Senator McKellar questioned Mr. David E. Lilienthal who has been nominated to be Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and who was appearing before a joint Congressional Committee prior to having his appointment confirmed. Ever since TVA started to make Tennessee a better state to live in Senator McKellar has disliked TVA. He has also disliked Mr. Lilienthal, TVA Chairman. He appears to think that Mr. Lilienthal selected as many employees as possible for TVA from the list of available communists, and, consequently, that if Mr. Lilienthal is given atomic energy to care for he will send it at once to his friends in Moscow. There can be no objection to this line of reasoning. If the Senator can prove that communism possesses the whole-hearted devotion of this extremely able American public servant then we should run quickly to the TVA dams before they are blown up and limit Mr. Lilienthal's knowledge of atomic energy to what he can read about it in the newspapers.

But the strongest possible objection must be made to Senator McKellar's way of attempting to prove his point. For instance, in America, it is not permissible to prove any point by inferring that somebody's parents are not all they should be. Mr. Lilienthal's parents were born near Pressburg, now Bratislava in Czechoslovakia. That being so the Senator should not have asked: "As a matter of fact, Czechoslovakia is now dominated by Russia, isn't it?" He deserved Mr. Lilienthal's reply: "That is a complicated question; I might say that my parents were born a long time ago. My father is 78 and my mother 72. I am sure you are giving them very much pain by the maltreatment you are giving them on this subject, and I can express no satisfaction over it."

Senator McKellar is not very interesting to write about; Mr. Lilienthal did not find Senator McKellar very interesting to listen to or to answer. For a long time he listened and answered politely—then he had enough of it; he heard the Senator asking him why he could not carry all the statistics of TVA in his head, he heard the Senator say: "The truth is that your sympathies are very leftist, are they not?"—then he had enough of it and he said: "This I do carry in my head, Senator. I will do my best to make it clear. My convictions are not so much concerned with what I am against as what I am for . . ." He turned from the Senator, faced the Committee and made a declaration which has been read

throughout the nation. It is the kind of declaration that the professional investigator cannot understand; it is the kind that non-professional Americans have always understood and will always want to hear. Mr. Lilienthal said, in part:

Traditionally, democracy has been an affirmative doctrine rather than merely a negative one. I believe . . . the fundamental proposition of the integrity of the individual; and that all Government and all private institutions must be designed to promote and to protect and defend the integrity and the dignity of the individual; that that is the essential meaning of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. . . .

Any form of government, therefore, and any other institutions which make means rather than ends; which exalt the State or any other institutions above the importance of men, which place arbitrary power over men as a fundamental tenet of government or any other institutions, are contrary to that conception, and therefore I am deeply opposed to them.

The communistic philosophy, as well as the communistic form of government, fall within this category, for their fundamental tenet is quite to the contrary. The fundamental tenet of communism is that the state is an end in itself, and that therefore the powers which the state exercises over the individual are without any ethical standard to limit them. That I deeply disbelieve.

It is very easy simply to say one is not a Communist. And of course, if my record requires me to state that very affirmatively, then it is a great disappointment to me. It is very easy to talk about being against communism. It is equally important to believe those things which provide a satisfying and effective alternative. Democracy is that satisfying affirmative alternative.

Its hope in the world is that it is an affirmative belief, rather than being simply a belief against something else and nothing more.

One of the tenets of democracy that grows out of this central core of a belief that the individual comes first, that all men are the children of God and their personalities are therefore sacred, carries with it a great belief in civil liberties and their protection, and a repugnance to anyone who would steal from a human being that which is most precious to him—his good name; either by impugning things to him by innuendo or by insinuations.

And it is especially an unhappy circumstance that occasionally that is done in the name of democracy. . . . I want also to add that part of my conviction is based on my training as an Anglo-American lawyer. It is the very basis and the great heritage of the English people to this country, which we have maintained, that the strictest rules of creditability of witnesses be maintained and hearsay and gossip shall be excluded in courts of justice. And that, too, is an essential of our democracy . . . whenever these principles of the protection of an individual and his good name against besmirchment by gossip, hearsay and the statements of witnesses who are not subject to cross-examination are not maintained, then, too, we have failed in carrying forward our ideals in respect to democracy. That I deeply believe.

There have to be these investigators, and they have to be watched; they have to be kept in their place, put back in their place. But the real work of investigation is for us to accomplish, without pay or publicity; it is never sufficient to know only what we hate; we have to find out what we love.

C. G. PAULDING.

Landscape: Wheatfields

Frown there like Cressy or like Agincourt,
You fierce and bearded shocks and sheaves
And shake your grain-spears,
And know no tremor in your vigilant
Your stern array, my summer chevaliers!

Although the wagons,
(Hear how the battle of those wheels,
Worrying the loose wood with their momentary thunder
Leaves us to guess some trestle, there, behind the
sycamores,)
Although the empty wagons come,

Rise up, like kings out of the pages of a chronicle
And cry your courage in your golden beards;
For now the summer-time is half-way done,
Gliding to a dramatic crisis
Sure as the deep waters to the sedentary mill.

Arise like kings and prophets from the pages of an ancient
Bible,
And blind us with the burnish of your message in our
June:
Then raise your hands and bless us
And depart, like old Melchisedech, and find your proper
Salem.

The slow hours crowd upon us.
Our days slide evenly toward the term of all our liturgy,
And all our weeks are after Pentecost.

Summer divides his garrisons,
Surrenders up his strongest forts,
Strikes all his russet banners one by one.
And while these ancient men of war
Casting us in the teeth with the reproof of their surrender
(By which their fruitfulness is all fulfilled,)
Throw down their arms,

Face we the day when we go up to stake our graces
Against unconquerable God:
Try, with our trivial increase, in that time of harvest
To stem the army of His attributes!

Oh pray us full of marrow, Queen of Heaven,
For those mills, His truth, our glory!
Crown us with alleluias on that day of fight!

(Light falls as fair as lyres, beamy between the branches,
Plays like an angel on the mill-dam, where the lazy stream
Suddenly turns to clouds of song and rain;)
Oh pray us, Lady, full of faith and graces,
Arm us with fruits against that contest and comparison,

Arm us with ripeness for the wagons of our Christ!

THOMAS MERTON.

England's Struggle

Notes on manpower and
the British economic crisis

J. L. Benvenuti

OUR GOVERNMENT has at last made up its mind to tell the nation by means of a White Paper that we in Britain are next door to a headlong economic catastrophe—a catastrophe which will affect not merely our physical condition but the very basis of our political standing in world affairs. Why the government has waited so long before taking us into its confidence, and what, if any, are its plans for dealing with the situation, are questions to which at this writing we wholly lack an answer.

For some time, needless to say, the public has been conscious of a grave maladjustment. It is already familiar with the phenomenon of a manpower shortage which is due to two circumstances, and to some extent to a third. First, we still have to carry enormous military commitments which are in reality quite beyond our strength. Secondly, we are from the trend of the times carrying a much heavier bureaucratic superstructure. The third circumstance is to some extent related to the second, since it consists in the claim of the great mass of the nation to a higher standard of life than was enjoyed before the war, including improvements in social and educational services.

More money is thus being paid out in wages and salaries at a time when there are much fewer goods. But this is really only the beginning of our trouble. Our main malady is the loss of our foreign investments, which, as I have many times pointed out, were traded to America in the early part of the war in return for munitions and supplies. We must now produce and export more goods to pay for the imports which the income from our lost investments once supplied. It is estimated in the White Paper that in order to produce these goods an additional half million man years of labor will be required, and, as things are, it seems unlikely that we shall find the men to put those man years in. For the moment, instead of putting in this extra labor, we are living on the proceeds of the Canadian and American loans. When these come to an end our distress, which for the time being is being masked, will stand forth in all its nakedness.

Up to this point the revelations of the White Paper are frank enough. It does not, however, by any means tell us the worst, for even if we were able to produce the desired volume of ex-

port goods, it is more than doubtful that we are able—nay, one may fairly say it will be impossible—to sell them in the quantities required.

I find that I am now again compelled to repeat statements which I made in these very columns over a year ago. It is tragic that I should have to do so, but it is my whole point that truths which were over a year ago plain to every person who cared to sit down and study the matter, and which were, in point of fact, expounded in great detail in such journals as the *Economist*, are still neither grasped nor acted upon. I therefore ask the reader's indulgence once again to point out the following facts.

It is generally estimated that to be able to pay for our pre-war volume of imports and also service the American loan when payments begin to fall due, we shall now have to increase our exports by no less than 75 percent over the pre-war volume. An increase of 75 percent, however, on our pre-war volume of exports, is equivalent to an increase of 100 percent in our pre-war export of manufactured goods, which are now the only kind of exports that come into question, since we cannot possibly increase our exports of coal and raw materials.

Yet with Central Europe a dust-heap, the world has grown much smaller, and we have also to contend with the fierce competition of the United States. To suppose that in such a world we can double our volume of exports in anything less than a quarter of a century, is pure lunacy. All this must ultimately mean that even if we are to maintain a shadow of our former standards and our former industrial power, we shall have to produce at home vast quantities of goods (and, in particular, food) which we were in the habit of importing from overseas, and since it is to be assumed that these goods were produced with less effort overseas than we should be able to produce them here, it follows that our demands on manpower will, if we are to survive, be substantially larger than the half million man years referred to above. Of course, it is possible that even this expedient cannot save us, but we certainly cannot be saved by any other.

Tragic and alarming as are the actual facts of the situation, they are not so alarming as the apparent complete inability of the Government and

the Trade Unions, with which the Labor Party is so closely associated, to face them and do something about them. It must surely be obvious to a child that if our trouble can be remedied at all, it can only be remedied in two ways. It can be remedied by the introduction, in the shortest possible time and to the greatest possible extent, of every labor-saving device that human ingenuity has yet contrived. But the remedy most immediately and most urgently required is the induction of fresh manpower of whatever quality we can get and from wherever we can obtain it. Unless that is done, we perish.

Well, we have just, after an incredible hullabaloo, given permission to exactly 127 Poles to work in our coal mines. This out of the 70,000-odd Polish soldiers who wish to take up work in this country. We hope and pray that in the course of time we may get a few more. But for the Poles to be allowed to work here at all has necessitated the most unbelievable haggling with the Trade Unions, and that any other people, say people from the Displaced Persons camps, or even Germans, should come over and help us is, at the moment, a notion so revolutionary and breath-bereaving that you can at this writing only speak of it in whispers. It is possible that sheer necessity will, by the time these lines are in print, have compelled one or two of our statesmen to give open expression to this apparently obscene suggestion, but for the moment among the mass of the workers, and in particular the Trade Unions, the reaction is mulishly hostile.

I know what I am talking about, for I have myself had discussions with Trade Union leaders on this very matter of bringing over Displaced Persons. What they say is that the importation of Displaced Persons would: (1) cause undesirable social problems; and (2) bring about the existence of a "large exploitable mass which would threaten working-class standards."

★

There you have on a platter the thing which has brought this country to such a pass. That thing is simply fifth-rate thinking. What on earth do a few minor social problems matter—social problems mean here, I suppose, the proximity of people who are not quite up to our standard of table manners—if the alternative is a descent into the limbo of forgotten nations and the abandonment of our security? For it is nothing less than that. If our economic basis as a great industrial nation goes down the drain, our Navy and our Air Force go along with it, as do all the other forms of war potential which are, when all is said and done, our real counters on the checker board.

As to the argument about the large exploitable mass, this can only mean one thing—namely that the manpower shortage must not, in the Union's

view, be cured at all, because it is the basis of the Trade Unionists' favorable bargaining position. Probably the Trade Unions have not yet fully thought out this implication. Indeed, so far as I can see, the occurrence of any situation in which the word "exploitation" can be used with any shadow of relevance, stops them thinking at all. They are still proceeding on the assumption—at least, that is the impression one gains—that British business is run by a gang of malevolent half-wits, and that the chief duty of a labor leader is to prevent the said half-wits from putting anything over on them.

But stop! I am being unfair. After much groaning of the spirit, after much agonized wrestling with their inhibitions, they have now launched a campaign urging their members to work harder and to refrain for the moment from asking for shorter hours, and in this somewhat futile activity they are being uproariously joined by their friends and brothers who now occupy the ministerial bench of the House of Commons. Not that there is not some reason for talking like this, for there has been (this seems pretty well established) a very serious falling off of output per head. This is due partly to war weariness, partly to the backwash of the Trade Unions' own damfoolishness (some of the unions up to a few weeks ago still agitating for a forty-hour week,) but also, perhaps chiefly, due to the failure of recruitment in a number of industries during the depression of the thirties and consequent aging of labor force.

But even if personal effort could be increased by a far greater degree than is actually the case, it would not come within a mile of solving our problem. That can be done only by great and politically-daring decisions which go to the core of our malady on the basis of a ruthless diagnosis. It is quite obvious that up till now no such decisions have even been contemplated, and if and when they come they may well be too late.

The fact is that there has been a failure in statesmanship, a failure crass, glaring and complete and indeed almost unprecedented, and the reason for it is either that our statesmen lacked the wit for a clear diagnosis, or that they considered both diagnosis and cure to be politically unacceptable. It seems more charitable, so far as individuals are concerned, to accept the latter explanation, but one cannot help asking how a great nation expects to survive if its affairs are conducted on a level of intelligence which within a week would send a modcrate-sized shoe shine parlor into receivership, and, one might add, on a level of honesty which would be insufficient to keep an ordinary citizen out of jail for a fortnight.

In May of last year, I wrote an article for *THE COMMONWEAL* which evoked some editorial criticism. I was complaining at that time of a certain widespread listlessness and of a lack of

collective purpose. Because of this, I was accused of totalitarian tendencies, and was told that "when the Party or Government have the function of defining and propagating the Ends, Purposes, Objectives of human life, that is very bad in a totalitarian way."

As a matter of fact, I cordially subscribe to these sentiments and have no wish whatever to quarrel with them, though I agree that certain passages in my article might have admitted of an interpretation suggesting that I had. But I still think that my instinct was right, and that I was even then already conscious of the essential weakness which may prove our undoing.

I was in that article not primarily concerned with the formulation of ends—these are pretty generally agreed—though a Government, in my view, is not acting outside its proper sphere if it gives such an agreed end a more explicit definition, and I certainly did not want the void of which I was conscious to be filled by some kind of social regimentation, with slogans for drum taps, a thing I detest as heartily as any editor of this paper.

What I wanted was a greater clarification of means, and the impassioned pursuit of an agreed end by a means so intelligently, so clearly and so purposefully adapted to it that every citizen could grasp the connection of a larger plan. I do not see why I should not admit to a desire for something of this kind, and even to believing that life can be spiritually enlarged by it, without incurring the imputation that I am already erecting a concentration camp in my back garden. But these things demand a capacity for clear and bold thinking and a certain incorruptible appetite for facing facts, not only on the part of the government but to a considerable extent on the part of the governed. These are the mainsprings of that collective enthusiasm which I felt was wanting, and it is precisely these qualities which are so disastrously lacking among us.

I am always being told that I exaggerate the importance of this deficiency, and that there is a sort of instinctive sanity in ordinary people that guides them in the long run to right decisions and saves their skins at the eleventh hour. Well, it is not going to save ours, and I cannot help asking myself whether we are not too tolerant, both here and in America, of this fearful quality of unreason, this monstrous dethronement of the intellect, in the management of our affairs, and whether we are not too ready to accept these shortcomings as the inevitable price we have to pay for democracy, instead of recognizing them as the virus by which sooner or later democracy must be destroyed.

For that is what may happen in Britain. If and when the crash comes, I hate even to imagine what things may not arise—perhaps those very totalitarian horrors which the editors fear.

Tourist Notes

HARRY SYLVESTER

ONLY the Constellations were leaving the ground that January evening in New York, so you managed to get onto one of them, but the plane just sat there while the last light died and people became restless and the fat man laid bets the flight would be cancelled. The engineer across the aisle said they were just waiting for word from the control tower. The way it had been once or twice, he said, was that Constellations had taken off too soon after other, slower planes and had knocked the latter down. But only the Constellations were supposed to be flying tonight, someone said. Well, that wasn't quite it, the man said. The other planes were leaving the ground, but maybe they'd spend the night in Washington or Richmond. It was something to think about, though, especially after the plane did go off into darkness and you began to see what the people were. There was the tall man with the baby; some fat ladies; a whole group of engineers and technicians going out to work on a totalizer. . . . And all of them for some reason in enough of a hurry to fly through rain and storm. You had your own reasons, which began to seem inadequate. Three times they had wanted you in LA under what were considered good circumstances but you hadn't gone under the good circumstances and now you were going if not under bad ones, at least ones that seemed inadequate. The cities passed below as masses of lights and the engineer said you could tell the size of the city by the amount of red neon lights that showed. . . .

Standing in the airport at Los Angeles with no hotel rooms available, you began to think that it was not a good idea to go to Peru by way of LA. But finally there was a hotel room in Santa Monica and the sound of waves at four o'clock in the morning and that was the best thing that had happened in many days. LA was neither better nor worse than you had expected it to be. It sprawled like an amoeba; it was the taxi-driver's paradise; the hills rose up in beauty, what you could see of them with the "smog"—partly the formation of the hills, partly all the new factories. Or so they say. Then miles and miles to pay a social call and more miles to see a friend who was now a story editor and he explained patiently how you'd never like it there and you agreed with him.

★

A day and a half of it was enough and the next plane took you to Mexico City. It made no stops and you could tell when you crossed the border. There were cities and towns always in sight in

California, but in Mexico only a few villages and single lights against mountains. It was early morning once more in an airport and again no hotel rooms and the naval attaché complaining about the party of tourists being put through ahead of the rest of us. He was right, too, but of course it reminded the cynical that the war was indeed over. Sunday morning was bright and there were more men at Mass than you remembered for Mexico City. And after Mass you went and registered at the Plaza, which is not the best hotel in Mexico City, but again you had your reasons, for the place was charged with memory and emotion. It was from the Plaza that many of the technicians of the US Railroad Mission went out during the war, quiet men from Missouri and Illinois, most of them, some to sickness, some to death in the jungle of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, one of them (a former minister) to teach Tehuana Indian children how to play baseball.

There was a little bitterness in the memory, too, for a big magazine had given you a thousand dollars expense money in 1944 and asked you to do a piece on the Mission. And for days you had ridden with an inspection party, some of the time in the private cars with the executives and their families and some of it on the hand-car which went ahead of the private cars because of the spikes the Indians sometimes drove between the rails. Your companions on the hand-car were three Indians, one of them Tomas Hios, who had been left for dead many years before in Sonora when the charge of Villa's Dorado Cavalry had broken on the trenches where Obregon's Yaqui Indians were. Tomas had two holes in his skull and all the fingers of one hand were set at about a thirty-degree angle to the palm from an old saber-cut. But he had seven children and that first day on the car he pulled out an English-Spanish grammar and proudly showed it to you. You had been luckier than some of the technicians and all you had gotten was paratyphoid, but it was bad enough to make you bitter about their never having printed the article. No one ever knew why, but you suspected Senator Butler's remarks about boondoggling in Latin-America had something to do with it. Maybe they should have shown the Senator the graves of the technicians and of the interpreters (Mexican).

So you stayed at the Plaza two nights and you talked to Rodolfo the bartender there. He had fought against Franco when he was fifteen. The way it had come about was that his father had been a leader of the Asturian miners and one day they had taken the father away and no one ever saw him again. And Rodolfo had been in the line once on a tributary of the Ebro and one of his friends was dying and wanted a priest, so Rodolfo had gone fifteen kilometers through the

rebel lines and brought back a priest. He had forgotten about it, he said. He had a wife and a child now and Mexico was going to be his home.

The wind was blowing in the new bull-ring in Mexico City that afternoon and the toreros couldn't control their capes or *muletas* and even if the bulls were from San Mateo, they weren't very good and no one made a good *faena* until the fifth bull. Manolete had this one and he is supposed to be the ranking torero of our time. When he first tried to make a good *faena* the wind blew the *muleta* against his legs and the bull—small and not very good—followed the red into Manolete and knocked him down and he lay there prone and none of the *cuadrilla* within twenty-five yards of him to make the *quité* and you could see the horn pressing into his back and why he lived no one knew. They carried Manolete behind the *barrera*, but he broke away and ran out and began to pass the bull again with the spread *muleta* and it became the only good *faena* of the day. There were 55,000 people screaming and Manolete collapsing or pretending to. He was grandstanding, one American said. Which perhaps he was; he was entitled to.

★

The local plane was held up an hour in Guatemala City by immigration and you were a little uneasy, for friends there had written that the government did not like what you had written about the place. But finally it took off into heat again and you remembered that leg of the journey to El Salvador from another time. The terrain is such there that the heat makes the air bumpier than almost any other place in Central America and the little plane was thrown around a good deal. It made you look at the land. Even from the air the brutal quality of the terrain was manifest. Sharp new mountains and steep gullies and arroyos and the heat haze over all of it, for it was the middle of the dry season. Thousands of square miles and no sign of human life.

At the airport in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, a troupe of Mexican movie people were waiting for the plane, a very pretty girl and three men, including Jorge Negrete. One of the other men, dressed in a fancy leather jacket, had taken a coat and was passing an imaginary bull. The *chollos* standing around knew he was wrong, but grinned and were pleased, for after all he was a movie star.

★

Managua was hot and you thought it might be even worse in San Jose, Costa Rica, where you were to spend the night. But a wind blew there and through yellow light people made their way to the French Empire of the Municipal Theatre for a concert. While you waited outside, you got

talking to a Negro. It seems that almost all the Negroes in Costa Rica speak some English. This man's name was Esteban Clarke and it turned out that he was a lieutenant of detectives. He thought a good deal of Henry Wallace whom he had guarded when Wallace had been through there. He would show you the place the next day where Mr. Wallace had played tennis. It wasn't the first or the last time that Wallace's name was invoked on the journey. For some reason not altogether clear—perhaps the man's patent honesty—Wallace is talked about a lot in Latin-America, more than Roosevelt. Perhaps because he often slipped away from his own guard and went off to play tennis with no one to watch except someone like Esteban Clarke.

Clarke bragged about the democracy of Costa Rica as others have about the beauty of the girls there. The beauty was easily demonstrated for it passed you continually on the street. But about the democracy you would have liked to know. The opposition say it resembles communism, but then anything resembling democracy in Central America is usually called communism. You had other commitments, though, and you went on the next day.

★

And again there were the blue flames of exhaust in outer darkness and in the inner yellow light sleepy people leaning across counters. Half-full, the plane flew in total darkness for an hour and as the light came you saw that there were more clouds than was good and that you were in a pass with peaks on either side and that the pass was full of clouds. Finally we were told that we couldn't get through to Cali. The pass was only the first of three attempts to get through. We were going to go back and land at a place called Turbo in Colombia. But even that wasn't easily done. For the plane circled for a long time and finally dropped through cloud and was over what looked like a lake but was an arm of the Caribbean and you had some idea of how accurate the pilot had had to be. The emergency landing field was a cleared strip in the jungle not far from the shore and Turbo a collection of pale houses. Pan-American planes stop there twice a week on the run to Medellin, so the field was pretty well maintained. An almost professionally cheerful youth named Altamirano, from northern California, was superintendent of the airport and it was proving to be a big day. The semi-weekly plane was in and Altamirano was bragging about the fishing nearby to the Americans stretching their legs. With our Panagra plane pulled up behind the other one, Altamirano said the place began to look like an airport. He was going to get married though; they kept putting him in places like Turbo, he said, because he was single. The weather report was pretty good and we

left about an hour after the scheduled plane. Still there were a lot of clouds, but finally, circling, the pilot felt his way down to the valley of the Cauca and we flew along it to Cali. The muddy Cauca meandered through the green, rich valley, and each little ranch had its piece of waterfront. Thousands of cattle stood still in the heat, and orchards and planted fields succeeded each other for scores of miles. A few small cities showed clear at the edges of the valley and at last you came into Cali five hours late and then on to Quito. The high, narrow valley Quito is in had winds moving in it and the vegetation and the chill were those of mountains. The pilot did not like the sound of the starboard motor as the plane taxied to the edge of the landing strip, and there was another hour's delay while they checked points and plugs. Then in Guayaquil it was decided to transfer everyone to the DC-4 coming up on schedule. When the plane came in it was only half-filled; there were American tourists in it, and some Latin business men; there was plenty of room for the few passengers from the smaller plane.

At ten o'clock we could see the lights of Lima. Somehow it seemed more brilliant than any other city seen from the air. Cool by night, now in its summer Lima was by day warm, moist and beautiful. Iron lions roared in her courtyards and in the Plaza bronze figures gyred upwards about a stone pylon. Lima was full of rumors and coincidences. People you hadn't seen in fourteen years were there, now married and with families. Every place there were English and Americans passing polite insults along bars. The rumor was that Haya de la Torre, who runs things here, although he does not hold office, had been shot. Things hadn't been good since the cabinet's Francisco Grana Garland had been killed. Helmeted police and guards were every place. But Felix Rodriguez killed six bulls in the Plaza de Toros on Sunday; the horse, Armonia, won the Clausura, the Peruvian equivalent of the Derby; and the dance company of Joaquin Pérez Fernández, who is considered to dominate this era of the Spanish dance, was in Lima for an indefinite stay, if only because he could no longer return to Franco Spain. So you decided to stay around, even in the heat, and see what passed. When you wanted to work, you could back into the mountains at Huncayo or Puno.

At the Maryknoll house out in the suburb of San Isidro the young Maryknollers were coming from the mountains to rest or heal their altitude sickness and dysentery. This is a pattern one sees more and more in Latin-America, the Maryknoll house in the big cities and the youngsters coming in from the mountains to gather strength again, for no one knows better than they what has to be done for the Church there.

The Stage & Screen

John Loves Mary

I SUPPOSE the emotional complications besetting the returning GI will be occupying Norman Krasna as long as there is one single solitary benighted American soldier abroad in the world. And I wish I could say I find the prospect thrilling. Mr. Krasna's recent hit, "Dear Ruth," started the formula rolling and it has already gathered a good deal of movie moss. Here it works out as a roaring marital mess with the boy hauling home an English wife for reasons of quota, rapid divorce, and most of all, to oblige his best buddy—only to find himself faced with a choice of bigamy or the loss of his own girl. As produced, it's pretty cute, pretty funny, pretty neatly acted on the whole, with Tom Ewell and Loring Smith distinguishing themselves. And everybody on the house-side loves it out loud. I guess my only trouble is that I'm pretty tired of it. (*at the Booth*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Weaker Sex, Indeed

MELODRAMAS continue to pour in. This week's quota brings us three in which pretty actresses portray women whose codes of behavior are by no means as attractive as their good looks.

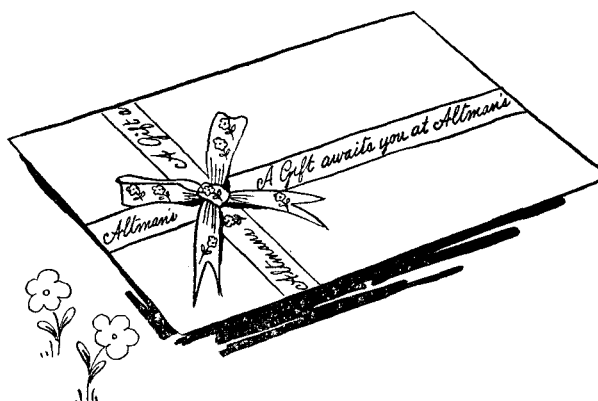
"*Bedelia*," based on Vera Caspary's novel about a woman addicted to murdering her husbands in order to collect their insurance, has the makings of a Hitchcock thriller. But Lance Comfort saw fit to direct this English picture in a manner that is almost devoid of suspense. Of course it has its moments: we wonder what the artist (played by Barry K. Barnes) is up to when he attaches himself to *Bedelia* (Margaret Lockwood) and her current husband (Ian Hunter) who are honeymooning at Monte Carlo. But shortly after the scene shifts to England this man reveals himself as a detective and warns the husband. So the last part of the film is merely a contest between the wicked woman and the forces opposing her. I really don't know what this slow-plodding movie is trying to do or say. Since it lacks suspense and makes no attempt to explain the main character or her motives, the picture rings no bell either as entertainment or interesting case history. Miss Lockwood, however, does succeed in coming up to the surviving husband's description: "*Bedelia* radiates innocence and beauty—like a poisonous flower."

In one scene in "*The Locket*," Brian Aherne, portraying a psychiatrist, describes the leading character as being "so perfect she's suspect." Just how suspect Nancy (Laraine Day) really is is revealed in this complicated and suspenseful movie. The psychiatrist spills the beans to Nancy's prospective groom (Gene Raymond) immediately before the wedding—and the beans, taken all together, prove that Nancy has made a mess of her own life as well as the lives of several other people including

B. ALTMAN & CO.

FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK



Birthday?

Anniversary?

Shower?

ALL THROUGH THE YEAR AN

Altman
Gift Certificate

IS THE IDEAL GIFT

Gift Certificates may be purchased
for any amount . . . can be used
in any Altman department, at any
time. Available at our special booth
on the main floor.

the psychiatrist, her former husband, who was probably not as smart as men in that profession should be. It would be unfair to tell too much of this rather contrived plot because John Brahm has directed Sheridan Gibney's script in a teasing manner that reveals only a little at a time. But I should warn you, if you go to this picture, to see it from the beginning, for its method is so complex, that it requires concentration—especially when the psychiatrist's story (told in a flashback) includes a flashback within another flashback. Furthermore Nancy, being a schizophrenic, doesn't stick to the truth, and the situation becomes more tense when her psychiatrist husband believes her tale rather than the less likely one of her artist friend (Robert Mitchum). The acting throughout this unusual movie is good, especially Sharyn Moffett's in the childhood episode that gives the key to Nancy's later behavior. I suppose, now that Hollywood has decided that psychology, psychiatry and allied sciences are here to stay, that we shall have a full cycle of movies dealing with characters whose frustrations stem from childhood inhibitions. I hope film makers realize the importance of their subject matter. At least in this picture (whose locket becomes a symbol of the love that Nancy needed) no quick and easy cure is suggested in the finale.

Most of "*Nora Prentiss*" is told in a flashback, too; but the film is given a touch of mystery because we don't know who the speaker is until the final scenes. Although Ann Sheridan plays the title character very seductively, the leading rôle is played by Kent Smith as a middle-aged, married doctor who tires of his respectable home life and soon finds that his casual friendship with a night club singer is growing beyond bounds. The story takes a decided melodramatic turn when this doctor, assuming the identity of a patient who died suddenly in his office, goes to New York with Nora. Subsequent events prove that crime does not pay, but by this time the whole film is so soaked in an atmosphere of sordid yellow journalism that it is not even helped much by the competent performances of Sheridan or Smith or the supporting cast (Bruce Bennett, Rosemary DeCamp, Robert Alda). The prize understatement of the week comes from Nora. After running away with a married man, the father of two children, she resents having to hide out in a New York hotel and says indignantly, "We've done nothing to be ashamed of!"

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Angelic Porcupine

MASON WADE

FEW AMERICANS have been such thorough citizens of the world as Henry Adams. His heritage did much to make that possible: great-grandson of the second President of the United States, grandson of the sixth President, and son of that Minister to London who was often expected to be the third President Adams, Henry Adams belonged to the American royal family, with a political tradition of a greatness and continuity unequaled in this country's history. His mother was the

daughter of Peter Chardon Brooks, Boston's richest merchant, and all his life Henry Adams enjoyed the freedom of ample private means and the friendship of the rich and influential.

His environment was as favorable as his heredity: as a boy he was made free of the Adams library, perhaps the greatest then in private hands in America, and he was exposed to the minds of such brilliant friends of his father as John Gorham Palfrey and Charles Sumner. He had the best education New England then afforded, with two years of European study and travel after Harvard. Then, as his father's secretary, first in Washington and later in London, Henry Adams enjoyed those opportunities usually granted to the bright young men of the British ruling class but rarely afforded to Americans. When he renounced the family tradition of public service upon his return to America, because of the sordidness of post-Civil War politics, he fell into a professorship of history at Harvard and the editorship of the *North American Review*, then the most influential American magazine. He made a happy marriage in the academic world of Cambridge and honeymooned for another year in Europe, at the start of a social and intellectual partnership such as few marriages achieve. After seven years of teaching, during which he introduced the seminar system and baked Harvard's first batch of Ph.D.s, he turned to a literary and historical career, producing a still standard "Life of Gallatin," his two novels, "Democracy" and "Esther," and the beginning of his "History of the United States during the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison." Meanwhile he enjoyed the life of an insider in the official and social worlds of Washington, for he had put provincial Boston behind him: "I do not love Boston, Mass., and would rather go to heaven another way."

His wife's tragic suicide in 1885 shattered this brilliant early career. He felt that he was "quite finished," and that "the present becomes positively repulsive; and the past alone seems real." Seeking to forget, he set out for Japan with the artist John La Farge as companion. Five months of the East and contact with oriental religion restored him to a superficial stability, which masked the inner despair and pessimism which marked the rest of his life. He returned to Washington and completed his "History," which as the editor of this volume acutely remarks, was "a literary monument to only the first part of Henry Adams's life."

After the publication of the nine-volume work was completed in 1891, he abandoned professional history, the career he had chosen out of disgust with contemporary politics and money-making, the traditional fields of his family, in the belief that "No one has done better and won more in any business or pursuit than has been acquired by men like Prescott, Motley, Frank Parkman, Bancroft, and so on in historical writing; none of them men of extraordinary gifts, or who would have been likely to do very much in the world if they had chosen differently. What they did can be done by others."

* Henry Adams and His Friends. Edited by Harold Dean Cater. Houghton. \$7.50.

With La Farge he again set out to forget his despair in the Never-Never Land of the South Seas. He spent a year and a half in Hawaii, Tahiti, Samoa, and Fiji, returning home by way of Australia, Ceylon, Paris, and London. From then on he divided his life between Washington and Paris and London, for as he remarked, "I gravitate to a capital by a primary law of nature." Travel was his favorite antidote for his gnawing despair, and he wandered much, from the Tetons to the Holy Land, always an acute observer of the shifting world about him. La Farge had given him a deeper understanding of art than he had earlier gained from his friends Richardson and St. Gaudens; and to this new preoccupation he added mathematics, international economics, science, and philosophy. From these varied disciplines and his original interests in history and literature he evolved the brilliant syntheses which are so many bulletins on his search for a philosophy of history: "Mont St. Michel and Chartres," the "Education of Henry Adams," and the "Rule of Phase Applied to History." He was much more of a student and a much greater writer in this second period than in the first, but he hid the student and the writer behind the pose of a cynical and dilettante observer of the world. So intelligent an acquaintance as Mr. Justice Holmes was put off by this pose: "When I called at his house and he was posing to himself as the old cardinal, he would turn everything to dust and ashes." But most people who met Adams were fascinated by his charm in conversation and in correspondence, and to those who were not repulsed by the elaborate defenses of the Angelic Porcupine—as his friends John Hay and St. Gaudens christened him—and who became his intimates, he revealed a rare tenderness and sympathy, as well as his efforts to read the riddles of the universe.

★

More than half of the 750 unpublished letters in this volume date from the nineties onward, and reveal more fully the human side of Henry Adams than do Worthington Ford's more formal two volumes of letters—the side which was hinted at in Mabel La Farge's slight selection, "Letters to a Niece." Adams had the usual Brahmin passion for privacy, but like the earlier great New Englanders in their journals, he revealed himself fully in his letters to a few intimates. "Unlike most American men of his generation, Henry Adams enjoyed women. On the whole he found their society more sympathetic than that of men." So writes Mr. Cater, in the 100-page "Biographical Introduction," which is intended to balance the false picture presented by Adams in the "Education," which was written to avoid the attentions of a biographer.

This taste is not surprising, in the light of Adams's exquisite sensibilities and his interests, in an age of growing vulgarity and materialism. And as the letters to Elizabeth Cameron were biographically the richest in the Ford volumes, so those to Mabel La Farge, Anna Cabot Lodge, Mrs. Winthrop Chanler, and Rebecca Gilman Rae are in this one. Mr. Cater has also made available notable additions to the Brooks Adams and John Hay

THEATRE GUILD PRODUCTIONS

"A Superb Drama"—Watts, Post

**EUGENE O'NEILL'S
THE ICEMAN COMETH**

EVENINGS ONLY INCLUDING SUNDAY

CURTAIN AT 7:30 P. M. SHARP

MARTIN BECK Theatre 45th STREET | No Performance
West of 9th Ave. MONDAY**INA CLAIRE**

In GEORGE KELLY'S Gay Comedy

The FATAL WEAKNESSWith MARGARET DOUGLASS & HOWARD ST. JOHN
Directed by MR. KELLY & Designed by DONALD GENSLEIGH**ROYALE Theatre** 45th Street West of Broadway. Evgs. 8:35
Matinees Thursday and Saturday 2:35THE MUSICAL
HIT**CAROUSEL**Music by RICHARD RODGERS Book & Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd Directed by ROUBEN MAMOULIAN Dances by AGNES de MILLE
with HENRY MICHEL—IVA WITHERS—JEAN DARLING
ERIC MATSON—JOHN CONTE—JEAN CASTO**MAJESTIC Thea.** 44th Street West of Broadway. Evgs. 8:30
Matinees Thursday and Saturday 2:30THE MUSICAL
HIT**OKLAHOMA!**Music by RICHARD RODGERS Book & Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd Directed by ROUBEN MAMOULIAN Dances by AGNES de MILLE
HAROLD KEEL—MARY HATCHER—DAVID BURNS—RUTH WESTON**ST. JAMES Thea.** 44th Street West of Broadway. Evgs. 8:30
Matinees Thursday and Saturday 2:30

"A smash hit of enormous proportions."—Ward Morehouse, Sun

MAX GORDON Presents

BORN YESTERDAY

The Hilarious Comedy Hit by GARSON KANIN

LYCEUM THEA. 45th St. E. of B'way. CH. 4-4256.

Evgs. 8:40. Mats. Wed. and Sat., 2:40

TRAINED CASEWORKERS WANTED**For Catholic Family and Child Welfare Agency,
Expanding and Developing its Program**GRADE I.....\$2400-\$3180
GRADE II.....\$2700-\$3360**CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICE****998 MARKET STREET, SAN FRANCISCO 3, CALIFORNIA****SCHOOL OF SACRED THEOLOGY**

for Sisters and Lay-women

SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE, NOTRE DAME

Holy Cross, Indiana

Prerequisites: A degree of Bachelor of Arts
A reading knowledge of Latin**IMMACULATA
JUNIOR
COLLEGE****Washington, D. C.**

An accredited Catholic Institution for Women. Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Resident and Day Students. 2 year transfer course in Liberal Arts. Terminal courses in Home Crafts, Secretarial Science, General, Fine Arts.

SEMINARY—Four Year College Preparatory
Dunblane Hall—Grades 1 to 8. Address: The Secretary.

series already published, as well as important letters to E. L. Godkin, Henry Holt, John F. Jameson, Whitelaw Reid, and Henry Osborn Taylor. These are but high points, for the volume includes letters to more than a hundred people, among them the most notable of Adams's contemporaries in America and Europe. Adams wrote differently to different people, just as he could adapt his conversation to the wide range of guests whom he caught in his far-flung web and lured to his Lafayette Square breakfast table. These letters throw new light on many obscure as well as great figures of the era. The historical correspondence is particularly important, and is admirably supplemented by a previously unknown introduction to the "Rule of Phase," which is given in an appendix. The letters are more helpfully annotated than in the Ford volumes, though in some instances the identifying footnotes seem to be calculated for morons.

Though Mr. Cater has seemingly scraped the Adams epistolary barrel nearly bare—he lists only three known series of letters which have escaped him—there is no evidence of a decline in quality from those previously published. In his preface the editor makes the modest claim that Adams was "probably the foremost letter-writer of his generation in America." This is an exceedingly cautious understatement, for there are no letters in American literature to match those of Adams in literary and historical value, in intellectual content and scope and range, and in charm. They are only rivaled in some respects by those of John Jay Chapman, and Chapman led a much narrower life, though he and his wife hardly deserved Adams's comment that they were "the most ordinary conventional simple-minded of cranks, about as near our time as they are to the twelfth century."

It is interesting to speculate whether with his letters Adams deliberately tried to fill a gap in American literature of which he was warily conscious. In 1869 he observed that "In the way of [American] letters there is nothing but my old great-grandmother Abigail Adams's that are worth reading." And in the same year he commented that "Horace Walpole is so extremely like one of ourselves; not so clever, of course, but otherwise he might be a letter-writer of today." In his second period, when his loneliness and intellectual energy found an outlet in a flood of correspondence, Adams certainly helped to fill the gap only partially closed by Abigail Adams, and he outmatched Walpole at his own game. The pageant of the Gilded Age in Washington, Paris, London, and the fashionable resorts of American and English and European society from 1860 to 1914 is nowhere else more sharply portrayed. But Adams was no mere society gossip, though he dearly loved gossip and was exceedingly good at it. All his life he remained a keen student of politics, and through his intellectual companionship with Carl Schurz, Godkin, Hay, Theodore Roosevelt, Cabot Lodge, Cecil Spring-Rice, and the diplomatic world at large, exercised an influence that no student of the period can afford to neglect. Part of the "old cardinal" pose was a delight in being in the know and in pulling strings behind the scenes of great events. Adams was a diplomat *manqué*, which is not surprising considering his seven

years at the London legation during one of the great American diplomatic crises. Though he never received the foreign mission which he had once hoped might close his historical career, he did win the social dignity and European reputation which he had hoped for. His English visits and correspondence made him as potent a figure in Anglo-American relations as many of the Ambassadors to the Court of St. James whose post he had once aspired to fill before he made a pose of finding vanity in all worldly things—except his books and bric à brac, his Louis XV furniture, his Ming *potiches*, his Lafayette Square house and his Paris apartment, and various American, French, and English great country houses.

★

Adams was a bundle of contradictions, as the St. Gaudens plaque of the winged porcupine with the learned head, and its inscription, "*Porcupinus Angelicus—Honi Soit Qui Mal y Pense*," suggests. He rebelled against the Brahmin tradition of his family and against Boston, adopting as his spiritual great-uncle the radical Sam Adams and "trying to persuade people that I don't come from Boston and am a heartless trifier." But the effort was not a success, as he recognized: "If I stood on Fifth Avenue in front of the Brunswick Hotel and in a state of obvious inebriety hugged and kissed every pretty woman that passed, they would only say I was a cold Beacon St. aristocrat and read the New York *Nation* regularly." He renounced politics and never lost an eager interest in it. He devoted himself to literature and history, and achieved the audience of which he despaired by an elaborate coyness about publication of his work. He abandoned teaching at Harvard, and became a teacher of professors—and of the children of his golden circle, his adopted "nieces." He regarded his historical career as a failure, and he came nearer to achieving a philosophy of history than any American historian except his brother Brooks, who gave him credit as his inspiration. He early came to the conclusion that "history is simply social development along the lines of least resistance," but he devoted the latter part of his life to finding fixed laws and formulas for history, and according to them, set 1917 as the date for the crack-up of Western Europe, foresaw rule by trades unions in the twentieth century, and anticipated "a new centralization of which Russia is one pole, and we the other, with England in between." He was a democrat in principle and considerable of a snob in practice. He pilloried the "gold-bugs" and enjoyed his large income. He hated the Jews and showed a remarkable sensitivity to the Judaeo-Christian tradition. He mocked at religion, calling himself a "Conservative Christian Anarchist," and immersed himself in the great ages of the Faith and evolved a cult of the Virgin. These very contradictions were what made the man lovable to a circle of friends such as few Americans have had. Together with a charming playfulness, a classic felicity of phrase, the ability to write as he talked, and a first-class mind which never stopped trying to educate itself more fully, it is this contradictory temperament which makes this book a constant delight and stimulant.

In the Seven Districts

Martha Banning Thomas

PERHAPS ONLY people from The Seven Districts will believe this story. Many of them may know the house there, at the top of a hill, in which I lived for three years. In the house was a stone room, bare to austerity, yet the most benign, charmed place I have ever known.

Needing a rest, I learned of the situation, sought the house owner, and agreed on the small rental. "Does no one else want this place?" I inquired in some astonishment.

"No, miss. It is too inconvenient. I have left it unchanged for many years," she smiled.

This seemed an oddly honest statement from a business woman. She looked at me quietly. "I think you may like it," she said. Her name was M^{rs}. Deroux; she was large, and dark haired, with a calm, penetrating glance.

From the stone room a thick door gave on to a terrace of uneven flagstones. A window was deep-set in the masonry high above a cot covered with a shawl of dull maroon. A few pieces of clumsy furniture, worn smooth from generations of use (the house was almost three hundred years old)—stood against the wall—a large long table, three chairs, a dresser with two doors opening at the front where the scanty supply of linen was kept. Ranged along the top of this dresser were brown pottery dishes and two brass candlesticks, heavy, old, and of good workmanship. Hand-woven woolen rugs lay scattered on the floor; and in a niche above the cot was a tall, bright crucifix. I neither disturbed nor added to these furnishings. I felt that the pattern had been set long ago; to change it might jar its design for peace.

This stone room was for living, dining and sleeping. The kitchen was next to it with no connecting door; at mealtimes I stepped from kitchen to terrace, carrying my hot soup and vegetables, then up into the living room. And I remember how the threshold of this door was hollowed down, not in the center but nearer the great iron latch, as if in times past, many feet had urgently sought entrance.

A trellis for grapevines canopied the terrace. On moonlit nights, the shadows of leaves lay like black hearts on the flagstones. From the house the grassy pitch of a long hill ran down to steep triangles of crowded roofs. Below the village lay the half-round of the harbor, then the outer sea.

The winters were damp, often dreary. I never actually suffered from the cold, but I was frequently uncomfortable. There was a home-contrived brazier of cast-iron, into which I dumped live hot coals from the kitchen stove; this for chilly evenings in the living room. It served out its heat generously for so small a furnace; besides, I went early to bed.

On clear days I could see for miles across the water. But the fall and winter winds were heavy; I had to accustom myself to their endless crashing. Sometimes a fog of weight and substance settled down. At other times a light mist would hang low on the hill half-way up from the village; it crossed the path by a cluster of sharp-faced boulders, near a thick growth of juniper bushes. I could see over the mist because it was no more than a flung and twisting scarf. I remember that I thought this particular view interesting and curious; chimneys far below stuck up above the floating white like so many square

flower pots.

Provisions and supplies came winding up a rutted road twice a week. The gray horse and his driver were, both of them, deliberate and unhurried. This man told me he was half-Indian, half-French; his name was Payen. He wore a dusty black sombrero, decorated with a red flower in the hat band—in winter, with three rooster feathers. His narrow dark face looked haunted under the enormous brim. His long, upper lip clung to his teeth; his eyes were as little and bright as a porcupine's.

Bargaining was simple. He told me the prices of his produce; I paid them. His charges were low. Not a single person in the Seven Districts took advantage of me as a stranger, and a woman, at that. This, of itself, gave me a sense of ease and tranquility.

I had writing to do, little money, and a stretch of illness from which to recover.

"You go down yonder?" Payen would inquire nodding towards the village.

"Yes, sometimes."

"On clear nights of the moon?"

"Not always. Sometimes in the daytime."

His eyes would smoulder with quick approbation. "That is good."

Summer melted into September. The birds held their conventions, and left. Cosmos blossoms boiled and foamed over the garden fence. Haze softened the razor-edge of the far horizon. Evening and morning frost followed the course of the estuary which rambled from meadows I could not see, into the harbor at the foot of the hill. Strangely, my flowers were left untouched until the last of November.

I asked Payen about this. "It happens so. The sea sends up salt air that is friendly to flowers." He looked at me steadily out of the black holes of his eyes. "You must not be caught below hill on frosty nights . . . or when mists hang close down."

"Why not, Payen?"

"You would need help."

"I'm feeling much stronger now. I can climb the hill. I like to go down to see people and talk."

"Yes, that is good, because you live alone. But wait for clear nights, miss. That is good, too."

"But I've just told you, Payen, I seldom go down at night."

"Do not," he said.

I thought people very kind to be so interested in my welfare, yet I no longer had to fear fatigue and weakness. I was truly stronger.

Occasionally a friend from the outside world climbed the hill to call on me. Invariably I was complimented on the view (as if I were responsible for its beauty and magnitude) and scolded for remaining near it. "Some awful thing might happen to you. No one would know . . . and you here all alone, day and night."

"Awful things happen in cities, and other civilized communities."

"But you could call for help; *get somebody!*"

"Not always, according to the papers."

★

I stayed on. The peculiar unsullied peace nourished me. Living was inexpensive. The place was sanctuary, though I needed no shelter from enemies, nor was I in hiding. I sat on the terrace bench. I watched the fishing dories

go out and come home with the tide. On sunny days I ate outdoors. On stormy ones, I was equally content within. Serenity inhabited that stone living room. In it I could think and not jumble my thinking. Peace seemed a shallow crystal bowl with a silver rim; I could almost see, as well as feel it.

Once, in the fall, a letter came from a friend touring the Province. She had found the hideaway road leading to the village, and there, had inquired of the storekeeper, who was Payen, where I lived.

"Before he answered me, he went to the door," she wrote. "He looked up a winding stream which led to the harbor. He said 'Mists coming in, lady. Better not go.' I asked him if the way would be completely hidden. All he said was 'Better not go.' I'm not easily put off. I wanted to see you, so I started the climb. And here is the most inexplicable thing about the whole business; though I could plainly see your stone chunk of a cottage up there from the village road, I lost the path over and over again. A mist lay across it. I grew confused. I ruined my nylons on boulders. I fell. Finally I had to turn round and go down again."

I remembered that night. I had sat looking down at the village. The water beyond glimmered faintly as if lighted from depths, fathoms down. Between me and the foot of the hill lay scarves of mist, hugging the path. I had heard no sound of my friend's approach. The light wind might have been offshore.

I began to consider my own ventures. Had I ever really come home after dark through any fog? I could not recall having done so. One later afternoon, having grown tired of my own company, I walked down to the village. I needed salt, soap and matches. I went first, however, to call on Mrs. Deroux, to pay the rent. She gave me a cordial welcome, a cup of tea and some biscuits. We talked casually of this and that, but as the afternoon ran towards dusk, I observed that she grew uneasy. Thinking she might have other things to do in her household, I soon left.

"You will go home now?" she asked as I stood on her doorstep.

"I have a few errands at the store."

"Don't delay. Now that the sun is setting, the air grows quickly cold. This makes fog." Her broad, kind face was shadowed with concern.

I promised her I would hurry.

Payen wrapped up my packages. "Miss . . . you go back up the hill now? I come early in the morning."

I turned about and began to climb the hill. Maybe they all thought I had had a bout with tuberculosis (a disease prevalent in this district) and should not risk the dampness.

I climbed slowly. The air was heavy with a fragrance released from sun-warmed spruces, and mixed with salty sea-whiffs.

Halfway home I was quickly and unexpectedly surrounded by mists. I waited for them to thin and whirl off; instead, they coiled more closely about me. I grew chill in the penetrating cold. Grasping my purchases more firmly, I laughed, and pressed on. I collided with a boulder; my ankle scraped down the side, taking off some skin. I stood still a minute. I tried to forget that letter from my friend. Deliberately, as one turns down a flaming wick, I made myself calm.

Then I started forward once more. The same thing

happened. I tried again and again to walk through those coiling wreathes of fog, and ended by walking into a juniper bush or hitting a stone. Quite sensibly, then, I decided to return to the village. I felt sure Mrs. Deroux would take me in for the night. Curiously, I seemed caged by those boulders. I made several attempts to escape their stolid imprisonment. I did not fancy staying out all night in the chill darkness, within shouting distance of my safe stone room.

I groped about with my free hand for a large stone. Finding one, I sat down on it. My heart tapped violently. Like melting veils, the clinging mists wrapped themselves round me. I could see nothing but their writhing strands braiding in long, streaming, ghostly tresses.

I may have waited for fifteen minutes, shivering with the damp, and not a little dismayed, when I saw the light. It was dim at first, then stronger. Suddenly I could make out the path winding among the gray boulders. I jumped up and ran as fast as I could, and reached the flagstone terrace.

★

As he had promised, Payen arrived promptly next morning.

"Are you all right?" he inquired, scrutinizing my face with hungry curiosity.

"Yes, Payen. I hurt my ankle a little on a boulder."

"Ah . . ." He looked down at my bandaged leg. "But you got through, not too long a time?"

"Obviously."

I enjoyed his bewilderment, then thinking my advantage rather cheap profit, I related my adventure. "I was lost, Payen. I couldn't understand it. I knew where I was, but I couldn't get through. I couldn't even find the way down hill again."

"Yes, that is how it sometimes happens. Though, a lady not long ago, got down again. Maybe she did not need to go up." (So, he had been watching for my friend's defeat on that other night of mist and fog!)

"Then, Payen, when I was wondering how in the world I'd manage, and was feeling cold and frightened, as if I'd never find safety again, I swear to you, a light came near, like a glow from a lantern, though I saw nothing but the light. It swung all about me in a great wide circle. I know this, because I saw a big moth blundering about in the light, and a grasshopper jumping through. The boulders were all shining in the dampness, and the ends of the juniper bushes quivered, too."

Payen regarded me with radiant attention. He looked almost as if he were seeing what I described.

"As soon as I had run clear of the mist, the lantern vanished."

"Oh, miss . . . not for long, long time has this happen! You are worthy of the stone house." He waved his scrawny, dark-skinned hand at my dwelling.

I gazed at the vegetable cart, at the wilting red flower in Payen's hat.

"Now I will tell," he began. "Once, long ago, when the French people hereabouts were driven down to the sea, and taken away in ships from their lands and their farms . . . three men of the Seven Districts escaped . . . run up hill here. The mists hang down about them. The soldiers chase and follow . . . lose the way . . . fall among stones. They go back with much curses against God. Then," Payen's voice sank to a whisper, "lantern

shine in the darkness. It was the old Indian lady, friend of the French, hiding in juniper bushes! She had a lantern . . . lead the three men safe here, where you live, miss. They stay until ships leave."

"But, last night, Payen, I wasn't running away from danger."

"She comes . . . that Indian lady, when people require help. She came because maybe you need help very much."

We looked at one another. Payen leaned closer. "It is not to speak of ever . . . until it happens!"

Payen swung his crooked stick of a whip at his knee. "That Indian lady, was my grandmother."

Books of the Week

Human Destiny. Lecomte du Noüy. New York: Longmans. \$3.50.

THE DUST COVER on this book describes Dr. du Noüy as "an internationally famous scientist." I wish it had said that he was an excellent biologist who had worked with first-rate colleagues in this country and abroad, who had thought deeply about the meaning of human life, and who had learned to write extremely well. For, God knows, we can do just now with a very little of international reputation, provided we are offered (as we are here) a good deal of sense. The book itself is the sort of essay all of us dreamed was bound to appear (though we scarce dared hope it would come soon enough)—an exposition of the pattern of evolution as revealed to a scientist who has learned that man's aspiration to holiness is the most precious thing in the discovered world.

It is, one should add, not alone. Two others quite like it, one by an American biologist which is still in manuscript, make one believe that the old debate between science and religion has shifted notably into new terrain. That evolution is one of the most obvious of facts nobody any longer denies. The question is merely what evolution is; and when we seek for a reply we find that some observers are still enmeshed in the study of special evolutionary problems (such as the rôle of chemistry in the creation of life), while others have proceeded to stand at a distance from the vast accumulation of knowledge and to see what man has learned in its objectively given arrangement. It is, for example, an unfortunate legacy from the past that a host of people still believe that man has descended from the ape. Yet it is probably even more unfortunate that some scientists still argue that because the stone must obey the law of gravity man cannot be free.

The great value of Dr. du Noüy's book lies in the fact that it comes as near to proving as any argument can how important it is to escape from various limitations which tradition and prejudice have placed on the normal scientific outlook. Research has, for example, thrown much light on the actual rôle of chance in the world of things. It has also analyzed the problem of adaptation, and so has demonstrated that Darwin's theory was time-bound—that, in short, it was the creature not destined to survive who provided the basis for evolutionary ascent. In other words, the angleworm was as fit as a fiddle but he stayed in his rut whereas the direct biological ancestor of man was so frail that we have not yet found him. To have given the general reader—even the reader not commonly given to wrestling with the implications of

science—so lucid a statement of the major conclusions to which the patient study of evolution has arrived is to have rendered a service of the very greatest significance.

Dr. du Noüy weaves into this study a theory of telefinality which leads him to hold that the ultimate discernible goal of evolution, posited by Divine Intelligence, is the human brain, and that the ideas and ideals with which this brain is concerned will henceforth determine the outcome of the evolutionary process. The day of the dinosaur and the Neanderthal man are over, and the hour of Man has struck. Dr. du Noüy finds him still loaded down with the baggage of his animal past. Progress will depend upon the extent to which he realizes the opportunities which his liberty confronts. He may not do so. If he gives in to his fetishes and his lusts, his craving for superstition and his virulent anger, he can make the world he inhabits an even more terrible hell than it was in the days when the primates stalked over the crust of an earth in constant upheaval. Yet he can, on the other hand, succeed. If he looks forward and not backward, if he decides in favor of the self-purification which is so patently what evolution had in store for him, he will cooperate with God in realizing the purpose of creation.

Father Gerald Walsh has written that the book seems "the most remarkable essay in *natural* theology attempted by any scientist of our age." It is not for me to say whether this judgment is correct. I can only add that I have read every word of it with gratitude and a sense of personal enrichment.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Congress At The Crossroads. George B. Galloway. Crowell. \$3.50.

UNDER the Third Republic of France, a representative in the National Chamber of Deputies not only represented his constituency but also often went shopping in Paris for the wives of his constituents. An American congressman seldom goes shopping for lady constituents, for Washington is not a national shopping center, but his activities cover a wide range of activities far removed from the business of legislation. Only a small number of his constituents expect these extra-curricular activities, but bold indeed would be the congressman who refused to carry them out. In the rôle of a local ambassador to the national seat of government he must greet the home town folks on their "all-expense tour" of the historic East; he must treat the more prominent among them to meals; he must secure cards of admission to the White House; he must intervene in behalf of local interests in the affairs of administrative departments; he must secure and dispatch seeds, information on business and agriculture, and a vast array of government documents for the many who seek them. It is a busy life, but not a life for a legislator.

George Galloway reviews all these activities and gives us an accurate and detailed picture of Congress. As staff director of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, out of which group the recent reforms of Congress arose, he had a rare opportunity to study the weaknesses in Congressional organization and procedure. The present work makes available for the general reader the results of his experience. The work is heavily factual. No drastic reforms are proposed. Considering the mass of material which Dr. Galloway builds up, it is unfortunate that he does not go more deeply into basic reforms affecting the relations of President and Congress. He

lays great store by a Legislative Council of both Houses to work with the Executive. No one can deny that such a reform deserves immediate adoption. While such a council would remove some of the friction between Executive and Legislative departments, it would not remove the basic difficulty.

Despite occasional honeymoons between President and Congress, every student of government knows that such periods of good-will are few and of short duration. The eighteenth century system of checks and balances prevents the realization of the popular will in law. It beclouds issues. It confuses the whole electorate. We shall get nowhere by timid and tinkering reforms whatever their partial value. A major operation is required on our constitutional system, and the cautious among us are only laying up trouble for the future when governmental action will be completely deadlocked through executive-legislative disagreement. We have before us the very pointed lessons of other lands where the failure of the legislative process has brought disaster to democratic government. We are on the threshold of two years of executive-legislative warfare—two years fraught with fateful consequences for the future of both America and the world. A similar period of intergovernmental civil strife following World War I undermined all possibility of permanent peace and economic stability.

Dr. Galloway's book provides all the basic facts to support the arguments for drastic reform, but he stops short of recommending them. As with many others, the difficult way evidently frightens him. The very mention of *parliamentary system* frequently has that effect. Unless, however, reformers drive courageously in that direction, the operations of the national government will provide the best example in modern times of political irresponsibility, disagreement for the sake of political advantage, and perpetual deadlock in loving memory of Montesquieu and his eighteenth century doctrine of checks and balances.

JEROME G. KERWIN.

The Story of a Childhood. MacKinlay Kantor. Coward. \$3.50.

MACKINLAY KANTOR, a writer of Hollywood fame and proportions, has written a dedication of a page and a half for his new book of boyhood reminiscences, "But Look, the Morn." His story is contained in that fulsome page and a half, and I found the other 308 pages generally anti-climatic. They are not merely a penny-arcade expansion of his dedication, they are an embarrassing revelation of a sensitive and restless childhood in Webster City, Iowa. Grandma (cheery body), Grandpa (thwarted and surly). Mother (dynamo superb), Sister (colorless prig), a glamorous cad of a father, and many local "originals" of our hero's home town throb self-consciously through Mr. Kantor's book. Poverty stalks the boards, cold and disappointments, but "I-remember-Mama" over-rides everything.

Mr. Kantor, far from not knowing how to put his poignant childhood into words, knows too many ways. His place-descriptions are quite vigorous and colorful, but he loses his compass when confronted by emotions and people. Throughout his collection of recollections the overbearing adjective, the flamboyant phrase, jars, irritates and dismays. A favorite word in "But Look, the Morn" is "blat"; Mr. Kantor blats very loudly. His eye is fixed on MGM and another "Best Years of Our Lives." He could learn a deal from Sherwood Anderson

and Edgar Lee Masters, whose stringent portraiture seldom fall into the uncomfortable writhings of "But Look, the Morn." Incidentally that title is too classic for Mr. Kantor's un-classic fury. There have been too many authors waving the raw nerve-ends of their childhood at us. A little less heave-ho and a lot more know-how would be a fine thing.

So we follow the ups and downs of Effie Kantor, mother, abandoned by her dashing husband, and struggling, with unending optimism and vigor, to raise her daughter, Virginia, and her son, MacKinlay. The locale has the usual grayness of most Mid-Western towns circa 1900; the usual pettiness and provincialism. We see our young hero at school, on his newspaper route, in church; Christmas comes, and spring is not far behind, and the numerous family crises ebb and flow; Effie's Prussian suitor, MacKinlay's behemoth school-teachers, the eternal boyish sadisms and pranks. It goes on, heaving and bleeding, but never dying. The pioneer spirit "*enfin*"; "*enfin*," Webster City, I love you! But not thusly. MGM, take it away and play the lion's part!

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

European Witness. Stephen Spender. Reynal. \$3.00.

A SOUND, reliable factual account of Germany's reconstruction days, the position of her intellectuals, was never more urgently needed. But Stephen Spender's travel book is hardly the answer. The letters from soldiers overseas to their families during the war, no matter how distorted their reports may have been, were certainly no more subjective than this latest evocation of post-war Europe. At best Spender's work is a half-hearted attempt at objective reporting on recent conditions abroad; at its worst a naïve, irritating personal journal with far too many frills and emotional posturings.

Apparently, though Spender has had a fling at journalism for the London high-brow weeklies, a job of straightforward reporting is not in his line. This is unfortunate, for no writer had a better opportunity to get around, to see and talk to people in influential and professional circles; and, what's more, to find that his visit was not only eagerly anticipated but treated as an act of God. "You are an Englishman. Oh, perhaps, you are sent by God to help us," said one pious-looking woman in Cologne, explaining that she was seeking a means of securing penicillin for her nephew dying of a heart disease. No perhaps about it, our author, already considering it quite likely that his mission to inquire into the lives and activities of German intellectuals was ordained by God and not the British government, set about getting the penicillin for the ailing child. Not only that, but he confesses he was the center of attraction in the hospital when he visited the child he had snatched from death. There is an almost childish innocence about the way the author goes about these little confessions of his. Perhaps we are misjudging him. He might never have intended to have these jottings published as a very personal diary. How else can one explain such unabashed self-absorption at a time when the suffering of a dejected, defeated people should have been about all the human eye and brain could take?

Mr. Spender is, in fact, very insistent in his plea for humane treatment of the Germans on the grounds that human beings should treat each other as human beings. He is not altogether certain how to go about settling the

"German Problem," which he is inclined to consider "a blind for the fact that there is for the time being no German Problem." He sees Germany as a scene where the disunity of the Allies is projected, where once again modern states reveal their incapability to sacrifice national sovereignty to avert foreseen disasters. Looking at world problems emotionally, Spender comes to no wiser or happier conclusion than numerous other poets and journalists before him. His ponderously presented views are out of place in a travel book or, for that matter, in any topical book which aims to break through the haze of shallow thinking on occupied Europe with fresher, more vital information. RICHARD MCLAUGHLIN.

Journey to Accompong. Katherine Dunham. Holt. \$2.50.

YOU COULD call this little book the vacation diary of a dancer or the less serious byproduct of an anthropologist's sojourn among her study group. In either case it is charming and youthful, but still a competent study of an interesting society. The Maroons, among whom the young colored dancer spent a romantic month in hopes of recording their half-secret dances, were a formidable group of black Spartans in eighteenth century Jamaica. Today there is only a remnant, a villageful at Accompong in the mountainous northeast of the island, to represent that amalgamation of Africanisms which was so common in the West Indies a hundred years ago. Though the travel circulars and even our casual thoughts of the Caribbean probably remain influenced by thoughts of the Gold Coast, the African cultural complex scarcely survives except among the rarely seen Bush Negroes of the Guianas.

In an informative way, one gets in this book a standard ethnographic job, dealing with Maroon law, material culture, the work group, etc., a topic for each of the thirty days the diary covers. The arrangement has perhaps too visible a skeleton, but it succeeds in adding solidity to the pleasant, girlish subjectivity of the connecting passages.

Miss Dunham creates a sense of partnership with some of the significant personalities of the village, the Colonel (chief) Ba Weeyums, a worldly traditionalist, and her own unmarried housekeeper, Mai, in their uneasy position between a fiery past and a paralyzing awareness of the modern world bolstered by the primness of British colonialism. She finally establishes sufficient intimacy with two of the older men for them to work black magic for her benefit, something still precious to them though menaced in every direction by local disapproval or ridicule and even by the Jamaica law.

The book has its faults. There is a sometimes irritatingly chatty note. The lady will tell you in an aside that six shillings equal a dollar and a half, but will make you wait fifty pages for the explanation of some bit of Maroon argot which she uses continually. The reader is rather disappointed to have so few glimpses of the African dancing he accompanies her to find. KENYON BROOKS.

Letters from Lee's Army. Compiled by Susan Leigh Blackford. Scribner's. \$3.50.

THIS BOOK is not to be confused with "War Years with Jeb Stuart," written by W. W. Blackford. The volume under review was compiled by Susan Leigh Blackford, wife of Charles M. Blackford, who was a brother of W. W. Blackford. Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Blackford were prodigious letter writers. All the letters were carefully kept, and after having been privately

AFTER BLACK COFFEE

Rev. Robert I. Gannon, S.J.

Were you there?

Did you sit at the table while Fordham's famous president mixed serious opinions and sparkling wit, speaking before the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick? or the New York State Bar Association? or the State Labor Relations Board? or in greeting the friends of Poland, or China, or South America?

If you were, you will want a permanent record of many memorable occasions. If not, you will want to *hear* them for the first time — for the words speak warmly from the printed page.

February 27th

\$2.00

THINKING IT OVER

Thomas F. Woodlock

Did you read them?

For fifteen years the column written by one of America's greatest Catholic laymen attracted daily attention in the *Wall Street Journal*. He talked brilliantly and soundly on the problems which beset our day: law and justice, education and progress, government and freedom, democracy and totalitarianism, war and peace. The most striking of these papers have now been gathered into a single volume — and the amazing thing is how timely his words still are, and how intelligent his solution of our ills.

With an introduction by James Edward Tobin.

February 26th

\$3.00

THE DECLAN X. McMULLEN CO.
225 Broadway, New York 7, N. Y.

Press Month, IV

"In a republic such as ours, the primary responsibility for the nation rests on the individual citizen as in no other form of government. . . . Each individual citizen is obligated to examine the decision of the majority. . . . If the will of the majority is wrong, it is incumbent on the individual to accept the task of setting the majority right, which is no easy task. . . ." (From the official statement on Catholic Press Month by Archbishop Murray of St. Paul, Episcopal Chairman of the NCWC Press Department.)

That points to one of the principal functions of The Commonweal. For it is politically non-partisan, independent of any party line and intent on the facts involved in every significant matter of public controversy. And The Commonweal is more concerned with the real meaning of what is happening in this country and overseas than in the backstage gossip of various prominent figures.

Also important in this magazine's purview are the books of the day—embodying as many do the ideas which impinge upon the course of our national ship of state. That also goes for the latest plays and movies. To contribute to the development of an informed citizenry, The Commonweal is offering *this month* an especially generous trial subscription. May we suggest use of the attached coupon while this offer is still good.

-----14 Issues for \$1-----
FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS

THE COMMONWEAL,
386 Fourth Ave.
New York 16, N. Y.

For the enclosed \$1 send me
the next 14 issues of
THE COMMONWEAL

Name

Street

City
2/21/47

printed in 1894, are now made available to the public.

War is pretty much the same old story. The merit of this book is that it recounts revealing incidents which many observers would not have taken the trouble to record. As a trained lawyer, and as a Judge Advocate on the staff of General Longstreet, Blackford had access to information denied many others. Since there was then no restraint against the keeping of diaries nor seemingly against writing about "military" secrets in personal letters one gets clear-cut impressions of many phases of the war.

Blackford tells of the departure of his company, the second Virginia Cavalry, for the battle of Bull Run. Most of the men were convinced that the war would be won by the Confederacy in a few weeks. The first battle deaths came as distinct shocks; seemingly no one had thought of that possibility. Mrs. Blackford had the task of the woman in war, carrying on her duties at home, one of which was the sad one of watching two of her small children die while the father was at the front. Blackford emphasizes the strict control exercised over the Confederate troops while the campaign was carried on in Pennsylvania; Mrs. Blackford speaks very plainly relatively to the pillaging permitted by General Custer while he and his union soldiers were in Virginia. As one reads of the barefoot soldiers attempting to perform their duties in eastern Tennessee in January 1864, one wonders that the Confederacy lasted as long as it did. The runaway prices for all necessities of life, the slaughter of men in some of the closing campaigns of the war, the growing realization that the South had lost—all these make this book extremely effective in visualizing the War Between the States.

PAUL KINIERY.

Painting in the USA. Alan D. Gruskin. Doubleday. \$7.50.

A quarto-size volume of contemporary paintings in color as well as black and white, this attractive book will look extremely inviting on a parlor end-table. The reproductions are good, if not extraordinary. Most visitors will probably leaf through the pictures without bothering with the neatly printed text. That is just as well, for Mr. Gruskin's exhortations about appreciating art and making the most of museums are none too amusing. The pictures themselves do not indicate any great vitality or meaning in contemporary American painting.

CONTRIBUTORS

Thomas MERTON is a Trappist monk whose volume of poems, "A Man in the Divided Sea," received widespread critical notice. He is a member of the Community at Our Lady of Gethsemani in Kentucky.

J. L. BENVENISTI serves THE COMMONWEAL primarily as English correspondent. He is an author and lecturer whose best known book is "The Iniquitous Contract."

Harry SYLVESTER, whose last novel, "Dayspring," was published about a year ago, is gathering material in Peru.

Mason WADE, author and critic, currently at work on another book on the French Canadians, sends this article from Windsor, Vt.

Martha Banning THOMAS is a professional writer at present living in a remote fishing village near Digby, Nova Scotia.

George N. SHUSTER, former managing editor of THE COMMONWEAL, is President of Hunter College in New York.

Jerome G. KERWIN is professor of political science at the University of Chicago.

Elizabeth JOHNSON is a young writer recently returned from service in the Waves.

Richard MCLAUGHLIN is a New Jersey teacher and writer.

Kenyon BROOKS is an editor with E. P. Dutton & Co.

Paul KINIERY is assistant dean of the Graduate School of Loyola University in Chicago.